

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE: Adoption of 2007 Buildable Lands Report

PRESENTED BY: Chandler Felt, King County and Michael Hubner, Suburban Cities Association

SUMMARY

Motion 07-3 is presented for your consideration and possible action at today's meeting. The attached motion recognizes the 2007 King County Buildable Lands Report as final and complete in responding to the requirements of RCW 36.70A.215. The motion affirms the findings contained in the report as the basis for any further measures that the county or cities may need to adopt in order to comply with RCW 36.70A.215. Motion 07-3 will be forwarded to the King County Council for approval and ratification by cities.

BACKGROUND

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires King County and its cities to implement a review and evaluation program, commonly referred to as Buildable Lands. RCW 36.70A.215 establishes the required elements of that program to include annual data on land development and periodic analyses to identify "land suitable for development" for anticipated residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The statute requires completion of an evaluation report every 5 years. Based on the findings of the evaluation, a county or city may be required to take remedial actions, commonly referred to as reasonable measures, to ensure sufficient capacity is provided for growth needs and to address inconsistencies between actual development and adopted policies and regulations. The first King County Buildable Lands Report (BLR) was submitted to the state in 2002.

At the meeting of the GMPC on June 20, 2007, staff briefed the council on the draft findings of the 2007 King County Buildable Lands Report. The report contained data on building permits and subdivision plats for the years 2001-2005, land supply and capacity as of 2006, and comparisons with growth targets established by the GMPC in 2002 for the planning period 2001-2022. Following the briefing and discussion, the GMPC directed staff to:

1. Prepare a final 2007 Buildable Lands Report for submission to the State in September, and
2. Prepare a motion to formally recognize the report, for consideration and possible action by GMPC at its October meeting.

Between June and September, staff from the county Office of Budget collaborated with staff from the Suburban Cities Association to complete a full 2007 King County Buildable Lands Report. The BLR is the end product of several years' research by planning and technical staff from jurisdictions throughout the county, with oversight from a countywide staff team and the

GMPC itself. The report in full was transmitted to the state Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development in September 2007 and is attached to this staff report.

The final BLR makes corrections to, and fills gaps in, the data presented as the GMPC staff report for the GMPC meeting in June 2007. Its major findings remain the same. They include the following:

- Housing growth has been on track with 22-year growth targets.
- Densities achieved in new housing have increased compared to the previous five years.
- Commercial-industrial construction has continued despite the recession of 2001-2004.
- King County's Urban Growth Area, and each of four subareas of the county, has sufficient land capacity to accommodate the residential and employment growth forecasted by 2022.

Neither the Growth Management Act nor the Countywide Planning Policies establishes a requirement or a process for adoption of the Buildable Lands evaluation. However, the Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board has recommended taking legislative action to acknowledge the completion of the BLR, in order to establish a clear period for potential appeals of this GMA-required action to the board (see S/K Realtors, Case No. 04-3-0028, Page 15). The state Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development restated that advisory in a letter to King County dated March 17, 2007.

In adopting motion 07-3, the GMPC would accomplish two things. First, the council would recognize the BLR as complete and final. Second, it would affirm the findings contained in the BLR as the basis for any further measures that the county or cities may need to adopt to comply with RCW 36.70A.215. While the BLR is not an amendment to the Countywide Planning Policies, following an equivalent track for adoption and ratification of Motion 07-3 appears to be the best vehicle for legislative action that represents the endorsement of both the county and cities.

APPLICABLE COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

FW 1 Step 5(b) establishes the review and evaluation program pursuant to RCW 36.70A.215.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Motion 07-3.

Attachment:

A: Motion 07-3: Recognizing the 2007 Buildable Lands Report and its findings.

B: 2007 King County Buildable Lands Report.